IMPACT & IMPLICATIONS OF GROUP AFFECTIVE COMPOSITIONS

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Abstract

The increasing emphasis on 'affective revolution' has led researchers and practitioners to appreciate the role of employee affect and its implications on attitude, behaviour, and various outcomes in organization (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Researchers have extensively studied the affect at individual level (Kaplan et al., 2009), with little attention on group affect and its outcomes (Barsade & Knight, 2015). The influence of affect in a group is more complex owing to the distinct traits, values and attitudes of members, thereby, contributing to the affective diversity in the group (Barsade, Ward, Turner, & Sonnenfeld, 2000). The Affective diversity is defined as, "the configuration of affect across group members that is not shared, nor held in common, by members of a group or team" (Barsade & Knight, 2015: 24). The concept is embedded in the dispositional affectivity, as it is an essential characteristic of the personality of an individual (Ng & Sorenson, 2009). Affect, being a deep level diversity characteristic, it is likely to influence team diversity, thereby, influencing the processes within a team and its resulting outcomes (Barsade & Knight, 2015). Addressing this gap, the dissertation attempts to explore the relationship between affective diversity and team performance.

Teams are conceptualised as entangled, flexible and evolving systems (McGrath et al. 2000)The overtime interactions of the teams and the comprising members embedded in a context shapes up the dynamic team environment (Ilgen, Hollenbeck, Johnson, & Jundt, 2005). These dynamic causal interactions can be local, global or contextual (McGrath et al., 2000). This got us curious to examine the contextual role of group affective compositions.

Prior research has suggested that affective context of the work group of an individual may also influence the attitudes and behaviour of individuals (Kim, Shin & Kim, 2013). For instance, studies have examined the convergence in-group affect (Barsade, 2002) and its impact at individual and

team level (Barsade and Knight, 2015). Thus, owing to its divergent characteristic, affective diverse group can influence individual members' in a group. Additionally, the group can have its own characteristic affective climate shaped by the collective affective tone and affective exchanges among members (Härtel, Gough, & Härtel, 2008). This further provides psychological safety (West & Richter, 2008) to members and likely to influence their decision frame (Grawitch & Munz, 2005). Extending this line of research, the dissertation further attempted to explore the contextual role of group affective diversity and group affective climate on the relationship between individual trait affect and individual performance.

For the study, we adopted a quasi-experimental design with student sample to work on a problem-solving task. The results of hierarchical linear regression revealed a significant negative relationship between negative affective diversity and team performance with no significant result in context of positive affective diversity. This finding contradicts the earlier research in affective diversity by demonstrating the significant results with respect to negative affective diversity. We believe that, the nature of task and team tenure could be a possible reason for obtaining this result.

Further, the multilevel analysis suggested the differential role of affective diversity on the individual performance. The results revealed that positive affective diversity enhances while the negative affective diversity reduces the performance of an individual with trait positive affect. This is an interesting insight indicating the differential role of positive affective diversity and negative affective diversity on an individual performing a problem-solving task. We also tested for the contextual role of affective climate and found the attenuating role of negative affective climate on the performance of an individual with trait positive affect. We obtained no significant results in case of negative trait affect. Research has established the imperative role of trait positive affect on individual performance (Kaplan et al., 2009). Our findings takes it one-step further and

demonstrates the crucial role of affective composition within a group. In addition, this confirms the age-old adage, "You are known by the company you keep" and how the performance of an individual can vary according to the different affective contexts in a group. The results are discussed with theoretical contributions, practical implications and limitations.

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Acronyms in Use

PRISMA	Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses
PA	Positive Affect
NA	Negative Affect
TPA	Trait Positive Affect
TNA	Trait Negative Affect
ASA	Affective Similarity Attraction (Barsade et al., 2000)
CEM	Categorization Elaboration Model (van Knippenberg et al., 2004)
ELM	Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Petty & Brinol, 2012)
AIM	Affect Infusion Model (Forgas, 1995)
DST	Desert Survival Task
PANAS	Positive Affective and Negative Affective Scale (Watson et al., 1988)
HLM	Hierarchical Linear Modelling
PAD	Positive affective Diversity
NAD	Negative Affective Diversity
PAC	Positive Affective Climate
NAC	Negative Affective Climate

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